



TRUE TEEN STORY

Vocabulary

confident: having a strong belief in your own abilities

media: TV, newspapers, and other outlets that communicate information to large groups of people

discriminate: to treat someone unfairly

gender: describes whether someone is female or male

honing: improving

Mo'ne in the dugout with her teammates from the Taney Dragons.

The Amazing MO'NE

How a 13-year-old girl became today's most talked-about baseball superstar.

The enthusiastic crowd chanted “Mo’ne, Mo’ne, Mo’ne!” It was August 15, 2014, and 13-year-old Mo’ne Davis was about to make history.

Mo’ne was pitching in the 2014 Little League World Series (LLWS), an annual tournament for the world’s best youth baseball players. Mo’ne, who hails from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was one pitch away from becoming the first girl ever to win a game as a pitcher in the LLWS.

Even better, Mo’ne was pitching a shutout, meaning she hadn’t allowed her opponents to score.

Mo’ne wound up and fired a 70-mile-per-hour

fastball. The batter swung and missed—and Mo’ne won the game!

Breaking Barriers

Mo’ne was the only girl on the field, but this talented and **confident** athlete is comfortable playing among boys—and her teammates on the Taney Dragons are happy to have Mo’ne as their pitcher.

“People make a big deal out of me being a girl,” Mo’ne says, “but my teammates don’t—they just let me be myself.”

People are extremely interested in Mo’ne, partly because only 18 girls have ever played in the LLWS. Girls generally have fewer athletic opportunities than boys do: The **media** pay more attention to male athletes, and most colleges spend more on men’s teams than on women’s teams.

Mo’ne’s achievement has

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Mo’ne appeared on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* magazine.

generated international interest because it may herald significant changes: Mo'ne proved that not only can a girl play among boys—she can be the best player on the team.

Time to Play Fair

Before 1972, only one out of every 27 girls participated in high school sports: The primary physical activities for girls were cheerleading and square dancing. At colleges, female athletes received only 2 percent of the money earmarked for athletics.

Nowadays, millions of girls participate in school sports—and numerous college and professional teams exist for women.

A 1972 law called Title IX is responsible for these changes: The law made it illegal for schools to **discriminate** against



A fan shows her support for Mo'ne.

anyone based on **gender**.

After Title IX passed, schools started creating more girls' teams and allocating more funds for equipment, coaches, and fields for female athletes. Girls like Mo'ne have grown up playing multiple sports and **honing** their skills through hours of practice.

Mo'ne predicts ongoing progress for female athletes: "Probably a couple of years from now, there'll be a lot of girls here," she told reporters at the LLWS.

She's a Star

Mo'ne's team didn't win the LLWS, but she achieved celebrity status nonetheless: She appeared on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* and in *Teen Vogue*—and in October, she threw out the first pitch before Game 4 of the World Series.

Even more impressively, Mo'ne was the youngest athlete ever to appear on the cover of *Sports Illustrated*.

Mo'ne has not let her new fame go to her head. She is too busy playing baseball, soccer, and other sports. Eventually, she hopes to play basketball for the University of Connecticut and then in the WNBA.

Mo'ne enjoys being a role model for aspiring female athletes: "If I can inspire girls to reach their goals," she says, "then I'm happy."

—Joe Bubar



"Throwing 70 miles an hour," says Mo'ne, "that's throwing like a girl."